

REMARKS

The Office Action of October 17, 2005 has been received and its contents carefully considered.

Claims 1 to 12 are all the claims pending in the application, prior to the present amendment.

The Examiner has indicated that claim 7 contains allowable subject matter, and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 9-12 have been objected to as being improper multiple dependent claims. The Examiner states that therefore claims 9-12 have not been further treated on the merits.

In response, applicants have amended claims 9-12 so that they each depend from claim 1 only.

The Examiner has set forth four separate rejections of the claims over prior art as follows.

Claims 1-4 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Eckberg et al.

Claims 1 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Takami et al.

Claims 1 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by WO 01/05862 as interpreted by the English language equivalent U.S. Patent 6,506,868 to Goto et al.

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by WO 01/30930.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 10/509,623

Attorney Docket No.: Q83796

As noted above, the Examiner has indicated that claim 7 would be allowable.

Accordingly, applicants have amended the claims by incorporating the recitations of allowed claim 7 into independent claims 1, 2, 3 and 4 and have canceled claims 7 and 8.

In view of the above, applicants submit that each of the above rejections over prior art has been overcome and, accordingly, request withdrawal of these rejection.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

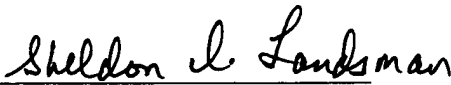
Respectfully submitted,

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